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RHMFIUU/USFJ PRIORITY  
INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 7400  
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 1219  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1830  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 3076  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 8496  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 7978  
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SIPDIS

STATE FOR I/RF, PA/PR/FPC/W, IIP/G/EA, EAP/PD, R/MR, EAP/J, EAP/P,  
PM;  
USTR FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE;  
TREASURY FOR OASIA/IMI;  
SECDEF FOR OASD/PA;  
CP BUTLER OKINAWA FOR AREA FIELD OFFICE;  
PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - PRESIDENTIAL VISIT TO JAPAN, NORTH  
KOREA, AND AFGHANISTAN

11. LEAD STORIES: All Friday morning papers gave top or front-page  
play to the Government Revitalization Unit's continued review on  
Thursday of fiscal 2010 budget requests.

12. "'Uncertain Situation' Should Be Improved" The conservative  
Sankei argued in an editorial (11/13): "President Obama will visit  
November 13 and hold a summit meeting with Prime Minister  
Hatoyama.... We welcome the U.S.'s decision to select Japan as the  
starting point of his first trip to Asia as president. This appears  
to demonstrate the U.S.'s position of placing importance on the  
U.S.-Japan alliance as a 'cornerstone of its Asia-Pacific policy.'  
However, it is regrettable that the President's first visit to Japan  
will likely produce few results for the alliance. The issue of MCAS  
Futenma relocation, the largest concern for the alliance, will be  
postponed due to Prime Minister Hatoyama's 'indecision.'... In order  
to prevent the alliance from hollowing out, Hatoyama should make a  
decision promptly."

13. "We Should Not Overreact to a 'Staged Crisis'" The liberal  
Mainichi stated in an editorial (11/13): "The USG announced ahead of  
President Obama's Asian trip that it will send Special  
Representative for North Korea Policy Bosworth to Pyongyang. The  
visit is aimed at persuading North Korea to return to the Six-Party  
Talks to make progress on the North Korean nuclear issue.... Right  
before this announcement, North and South Korean vessels exchanged  
fire in the Yellow Sea. It is highly likely that North Korea was  
intentionally trying to create a stir. Both the U.S. and South Korea  
have been carefully avoiding overreacting to the incident. However,  
Pyongyang might repeat this kind of 'staged crisis' in the course of  
future U.S.-DPRK talks. In order to avoid being influenced by such  
provocations, close coordination among relevant nations including  
Japan is indispensable."

14. "Japan Should Make Bold Efforts to Help Afghanistan" The liberal  
Asahi editorialized (11/13): "The Hatoyama administration has  
revealed its new assistance measures for Afghanistan.... The GOJ's  
decision to allocate substantial funds to its civilian assistance

measures makes sense.... The Hatoyama administration plans to halt the MSDF's refueling operation in the Indian Ocean next January.... Some people criticize the Hatoyama administration's policy as 'checkbook diplomacy.'... However, this criticism is irrelevant. Rather than bending to foreign pressure, Japan should take an independent and level-headed approach in considering what it can and should do for the stabilization of Afghanistan. Since Japan can only play a limited military role, providing as much civilian assistance as possible would probably be appropriate."

ROOS